



## THE WIMPS OF THE BID

This is the story of the organizations who SHOULD HAVE fought the Bid, and those organizations that actively backed the Bid. We will have a separate chapter on who funded the Bid.

Some words are necessary hereon the need to speak truth to power. AFTER the Bid was lost, there were quite a few people who opined that Chicago was never going to get the Games – that were never in the running. Some shrewd leaders told me that they were convinced Chicago was not in the hunt – so why anger the Mayor with protest and resistance?

But this was NOT the case in early 2009. As I stated above, for many reasons, it was thought that the 2016 Summer Olympics were in Chicago's sights and we were routinely ranked as the Number One Candidate. Here is just one news item from February 18, 2009:

“Several overseas-based betting sites list Chicago as the odds-on favorite, predicting President Barack Obama will give his hometown an edge. The sites also note that in 2016 it will have been 20 years since an American city played host to the Games. One site lists Chicago's odds of landing the Olympics at 8-to-11, better than even. The second favorite with bookies is Tokyo (3:1), followed by Rio (7:2) and Madrid (8:1).”

When President Obama announced that he would go to Copenhagen to make a final pitch for the 2016 Games Chicago's odds improved.

No Games Chicago paid no attention to the pundits, odds makers, and talking heads. The President of the United States with the Governor of Illinois and the Mayor of Chicago along with some of the most wealthy and powerful people in the country were all aligned to bring the Olympics to Chicago.

There are hundreds of community facing organizations in the city. There are dozens of social change organizations that do various kinds of organizing and issue work. The No Games team connected with many of these organizations before and after we went public.

Where were they during the Battle for the Bid?

Mostly nowhere. Here are some of the Wimps of the Bid.

**Kevin Jackson, Executive Director of the [Chicago Rehab Network \(CRN\)](#).** CRN had published a 2-pager, “2016 Olympics and the Chicago Neighborhoods” which seemed to be about positioning its members to bargain with the 2016 Committee to get goodies for their neighborhoods. It's worth looking at this document (download at <http://www.tinyurl.com/CRN-2016-Material>).



## 2016 Olympics and Chicago Neighborhoods

The International Olympic Committee has shortlisted Chicago as a 2016 Olympic host city. The Windy City will now compete with Madrid, Tokyo, and Rio De Janeiro for the IOC's final selection in October of 2009. With final bids due by this October, City government, the 2016 bid committee, and private developers are far along in their preparations to host the Olympics. The Applicant File gives a partial look at the bid, but the full picture will not emerge until the "bid book" is released this October. Here is a sample of current public and private activities in the Chicago bid process, as well as a look at other cities' hosting experiences, concluding with the Chicago Rehab Network's preliminary recommendations.

### Public and Private Financing

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF) districts in areas where the largest Olympic facilities will be built are capturing considerable tax revenue for City-designated development.
- Chicago 2016 has raised over \$40 million in private dollars to support the bid, and the City of Chicago has pledged \$500 million in insurance and its full financial liability and legislative support to secure investment in the Games.



An artist's rendering of the Olympic Stadium (the center piece of the Games) in Washington Park, which has created a local Olympic advisory council.

### Housing and Land

- The City will acquire and seek to redevelop Michael Reese Hospital and a number of other properties in association with the development of the Olympic Village and the Bronzeville TIF district. Saying that the Olympic Village will be developed regardless of the outcome of the 2016 bid, the development would set aside only the mandatory 10% of the roughly 6,000 units as affordable. Residents recently approved a requirement that would mandate 32% affordable units in a large-scale housing development in San Francisco.
- Plans to redevelop Lake Meadows—a moderate income residential community just south of the Olympic Village site—will triple the population of that development and "price out" many current residents. Further planned development to the south would dramatically alter the South Lakefront in anticipation for the Games.



The Lake Meadows redevelopment area, adjacent to the proposed Olympic Village site.

- Siting permanent and temporary venues in public areas from the south lakefront to Lake County has at times drawn opposition, support, and concern from local residents and advocates due to the potential impacts to public land, natural areas and long-term affordability.

### Other Olympics

- In London, which will host the 2012 Summer Games, costs on some venues tripled from their original estimate. The construction and production for the London Games is now estimated at \$19 billion.
- Barcelona's Games, which many saw as a success, spurred a 240% increase in new home prices in the six years leading up to the Games. Such an event would put ownership out of reach for many Chicago residents.
- Atlanta, the most recent American host of the Summer Games, witnessed the loss of public housing and affordable units, an estimated 30,000 people displaced, and the violation of the rights of homeless at the hands of the city's police.

This data from the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)—an international authority on Olympics and other "mega-events"—shows that, even without the massive displacement seen elsewhere, there exists a potential for negative impact to affordability for any host.

Olympics Fact Sheet

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I asked if Kevin would convene his fellow leaders of the social justice community and at least fund an independent study of the games of the past and their true impact on neighborhoods. He was non-committal and said some the CRN members were working to get community benefits agreements. I challenged Kevin to be a leader and help his constituents understand that there will be no such benefits. (I have a Master's in Urban Development from Spertus College, 1995, through the Urban Developers Program which was started by the CRN). I left with no assurance of anything happening.

Given that the Chicago Rehab Network was, and is, a coalition of front-line community development organizations building affordable housing and doing gritty organizing work all across the city, you would have thought that spending billions of public dollars on the Games would be counter to all the values and efforts of their members.

But there is no conclusion drawn – no call to action. Quite the contrary.

On the second page the reader is offered a menu of actions and activities they are invited to consider.

**The Chicago Rehab Network's  
—Best Practices for Neighborhoods and the 2016 Olympics—**

Above all, these recommendations come out of CRN's understanding that safe, decent, affordable housing is a foundational value for a healthy urban environment. In the interest of strengthening Chicago's foundation, we present these recommendations.

**Establish a variety of mechanisms to promote and preserve long-term affordability**  
—The Applicant File promises to *seek a city council ordinance to control prices of hotels and other services to make the Games affordable for visitors*. While understanding the distinction and legal precedent that favors controls on consumer prices over those on rents, the Olympics pose a serious enough threat to affordability that they merit a change in precedent. CRN supports an ordinance establishing rent controls in areas hosting the Games in accordance with the findings of the impact study, extending the same attention to affordability to residents as is already committed to visitors.

**Conduct a Housing Impact Study**—Understanding the latest census data that shows a decrease of rental households and growing housing cost burdens that affect more than 40% of both renters and owners citywide, CRN advocates a housing impact study that would mandate strategies that minimize displacement and preserve affordability across the city. The Chicago 2016 Applicant File describes Chicago's infrastructure as a tailor-made host for the Olympic Games. The Chicago Urban League has conducted a study on the potential effect of the Olympics on Chicago's economy. Still, there has yet to be concrete study of how the Games will affect Chicago's housing environment. Such a study would specifically address affordability opportunities for different income levels and different impacted communities.

**Create a Social Impact Advisory Committee**—Sydney's 2000 Games conducted a Preliminary Social Impact assessment that created 37 recommendations to ensure the Olympics had a benign impact on the community's most vulnerable citizens before, during and after the event. Eventually, Sydney created a Social Impact Advisory Committee (SIAC) and a Homelessness Protocol of government members as well as advocates to implement these recommendations. SIAC made recommendations to the Games organizing group, and issued periodic report cards for the Games' social impacts. CRN recommends a similar organization in Chicago to exist independently of the bid committee.

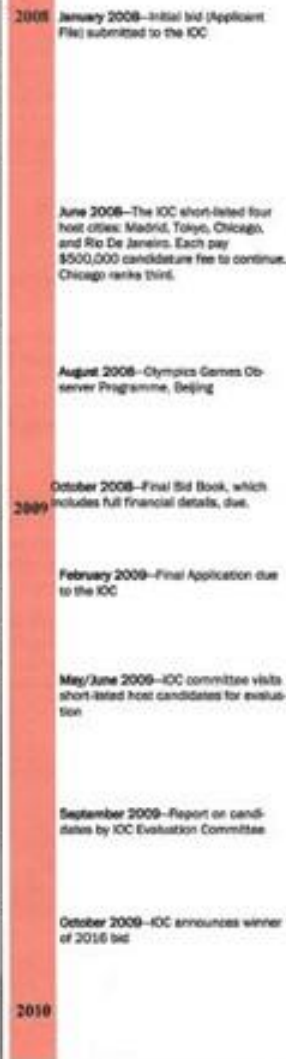
**Research Community Benefits Agreement**—Community Benefits Agreements (CBA) have been a way for neighborhoods to share in the economic prosperity of private development where they live. Potential CBAs would include provision for more affordable units in the Olympic Village after the Games targeting of jobs, use of land trusts, resource benefits for housing linked to Olympic generated revenues, and detail strategies and resources for inclusive local growth. Any CBAs would need to be grounded in the city legislative process for maximum accountability.

The bottom line for the Games' impact on Chicago and the housing environment in general is that all levels of stakeholders and decision makers consider neighborhoods as more than just places on a map. While rising rents, new construction, and escalating home prices have been touted as indicators of revitalization for neighborhoods, the same factors have prevented people from keeping their homes and harmed social, political, and economic networks for residents that stayed and then had to leave. Chicago must consider neighborhoods as people and place bound together, and we must not let the Olympics or any other event that promises to put Chicago on the world map do so without first making sure that it will benefit Chicagoans and their neighborhoods. In fact, we believe that getting the bid right on housing and neighborhoods will result in a stronger endorsement both for Chicago residents and for the Chicago Olympic bid.

*Sources: Chicago Department of Planning and Development Website, BBC news services, Chicago Urban League, Chicago Rehab Network 2007 Housing Factsheet, Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions, Chicago Tribune, Chicago Sun-Times, Online Opinion: Australia's e-Journal of Social and Political Debate.*

Olympics Fact Sheet

**Olympic Bid Timeline**



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There are so many problems with what is offered as Best Practices" - namely, best practices for **WHO**?

- “Establish a variety of mechanisms to promote and preserve long-term affordability” – What nonprofit jargon speak! Who will establish what guidelines? Who will force the Chicago 2016 Committee to abide by any such guidelines?
- “Conduct a Housing Impact Study” – Nonprofits LOVE to conduct studies, usually with the aid of an academic department or program. We KNOW there are not enough affordable housing units in Chicago. We KNOW the construction and operation of an Olympics will make that shortage WORSE. But, I guess the Rehab Network figured we needed one more study.
- “Create a Social Impact Advisory Committee” – If there’s anything nonprofits love to do MORE than doing a study, it’s convening a committee to look at the study. Who would serve ON such a committee and who would

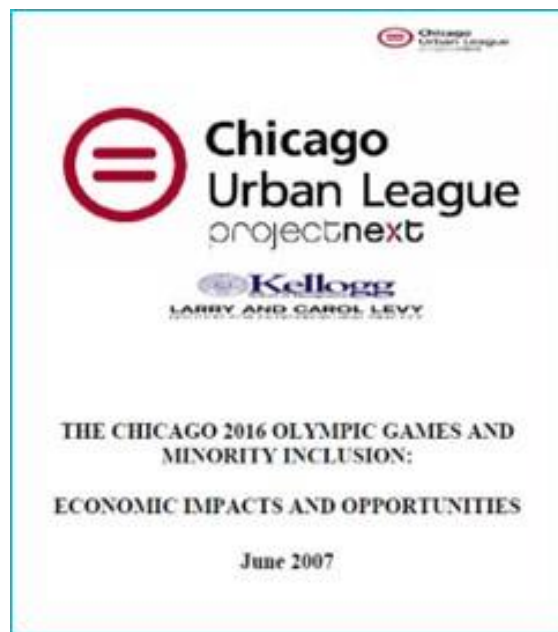
care? This imaginary committee would have no mandate, no budget, no staff, and no power. Good luck if you decided to join such a committee.

- “Research Community Benefits Agreement-Community Benefits Agreements” – Again, not sure who is supposed to do all this research. Again, CBAs are a huge waste of resources and a mammoth time suck for community organizations and are often used to provide cover for bad deals by bad actors.

I was deeply disappointed in the Chicago Rehab’s position – or rather, it’s complete LACK of position on the Bid. They had totally punted and walked away from their leadership responsibilities as being Chicago’s premiere organization standing for grassroots community development and grassroots economic justice. In 2017 they enjoyed revenues of \$547,000. So, in 2009 maybe they were at \$325,000 or \$400,000. More than enough to get into the Battle for the Bid. Kevin ended up serving on the Chicago 2016 Affordable Housing Committee (see membership list in the Extras section).

**The Chicago Urban League (CUL).** Organized in 1916, the [Chicago Urban League](#) “works to achieve equity for Black families and communities through social and economic empowerment.” In 2009 Cheryle Jackson was the CEO (and the first woman to hold the position). Another major organization which states it’s fighting for the African American community, especially in the arenas of economics. In 2016 they had revenues of \$6.6 million. Where were they on the Bid? Ms. Jackson was co-chair of the Chicago 2016 Contracting and Procurement Committee (membership list in Appendix).

I would say that the eye of the CUL was on the contracting prize. In June of 2007 they published a report “The Chicago 2016 Olympic Games and Minority Inclusion: Economic Impacts and Opportunities.”



It was actually one the first documents we harvested in the late summer of 2008 when we were starting to review the literature on the Olympics and what was Chicago’s institutional response.

This report is shocking – and yet, very typical of how Chicago conducts its civics.

It starts out:

"In April the United States Olympic Committee selected Chicago to be the U.S. applicant to compete for the 2016 Summer Olympic Games. Chicago will compete against Rio De Janeiro, Madrid, Tokyo and other cities.

Although the host city will not be selected until October 2009, the prospect of bringing the Games to Chicago has engaged the attention of the city's political and business establishments for over a year. The Games have also become a focus of intense discussions among neighborhood groups, civic associations, academia and the media. The Games are widely viewed as an exceptionally lucrative opportunity for the city, with projected direct spending in excess of \$5 billion. The possibility of the Chicago Games has also caused significant concern... The Games have been heavily promoted by the Mayor and Chicago 2016 as an opportunity for urban transformation. In support of the bid and the Mayor's position, Chicago 2016 organizers wrote that they view the Games as a "catalyst for widespread urban revitalization."

The three largest construction projects associated with the Games – the Aquatic Center, the Olympic Village and the Olympic Stadium – are planned to be built in predominantly African American neighborhoods. The Aquatic Center will be constructed in the Douglas Park community, the Olympic Village will be developed south of McCormick Place, and the Olympic Stadium will be developed in the Washington Park community. "Situating the temporary stadium in Washington Park will help revitalize a beautiful part of the City," said 2016 organizers. "The construction of new venues and infrastructure improvements means new jobs." The Olympics would generate substantial economic benefits before, during and after the Games...

Minority-owned businesses can benefit from procurement opportunities. The Olympics can serve as an economic development catalyst for Chicago's underutilized and underemployed African-American owned businesses and residents alike. Understanding the inner workings of the process will assist minorities in positioning themselves to capture some of the billions of dollars in spending an Olympic Games in Chicago would trigger."

The report goes on to look at the business opportunities if Chicago were awarded the Games and reviewed what had happened in Atlanta for the 1996 Olympics and what was happening in London as they had been awarded the 2012 Olympics. But they buried the lead. On page 18 the report addresses "Impact of Atlanta Neighborhoods" and states:

"Atlanta's experience shows that preserving affordable housing in neighborhoods in proximity to the Games should be a priority. Demolition of low-income housing to build Olympic venues, and the desire of city and state officials to ensure that Atlanta would be camera-ready when the spectators arrived led to the displacement of thousands of Atlanta's poorest citizens, most of them African American. Large-scale demolitions and land acquisitions had a severe effect on the poor citizens of Atlanta in the run-up to the Games.

According to Fair Play for Housing Rights: Mega-Events, Olympic Games and Housing Rights, a study authored by the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions: 2,077 units of public housing were destroyed in Atlanta, while displacing 5,813 residents. This made way for the Olympic Village and Olympic Stadium. Another 10,000 units were lost to increases in rents, code enforcements and demolitions, displacing an estimated 25,000 people.

Among the low-income housing casualties in Atlanta was the Techwood/Clark Howell public housing community, which once held a spot on the list of historic places. The Summer Hill neighborhood underwent large-scale redevelopment, including town home and condominium complexes unaffordable to the residents who once resided there. Some of the low-income housing torn down was replaced with mixed-income units due to the insistence of community-based groups overseeing Olympic redevelopment projects. But with annual incomes in some poor Atlanta communities averaging about \$15,000 in 1996 and with poverty rates as high as 30 percent, the majority of displaced residents could scant afford the new housing units.

Some displaced residents received Section 8 vouchers, but many more were forced to relocate to nearby suburbs, move out of state or join the ranks of Atlanta's already- burgeoning homeless. Ordinances were passed in advance of the Games making panhandling illegal. Scores of homeless were arrested, jailed, and effectively kept off the streets.

"The intention may not be to harm low-income folks, but most mayors and public officials say, 'What can we do about gentrification?' All major African-American neighborhoods in Atlanta have undergone race and class changes." -- Harvey Newman, professor of urban policy at the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, Georgia State University

But Mayor Daley had no interest in preserving low-income housing for African Americans. To the contrary, he was busy destroying CHA high-rises through the much-criticized Plan for Transformation.

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To the Chicago Olympic Organizing Committee:

Recommendation 1

Publish a detailed master procurement schedule noting contract availability for the Games, including requirements and application procedures. The schedule should include contracts for the Olympic Bid process as well as the Games. This schedule should be published no less than three months prior to the RFP deadline.

Recommendation 2

Immediately create an open and transparent bid process and notification system with the establishment of a website providing a ‘one stop shop’ with Olympic contract information.

Recommendation 3

Establish participation targets for African American owned and other minority owned firms. These targets should be regularly monitored by an independent specialist with quarterly results published. Participation targets should be set immediately.

Recommendation 4

Make diversity a procurement principle for all contracts and sponsorships (with respect to business enterprises and employees).

Recommendation 5

Institute a policy of priority hiring for residents of the communities in close proximity to the Olympic Stadium and other Olympic venues.

Recommendation 6

The decision-making body within the Olympic Committee overseeing contracts, investments and budget should have African-American membership proportionate to the city population.

Recommendation 11

The City of Chicago should enact affordable housing plans to ensure development does not lead to resident displacement.

The Chicago Urban League knew well the disasters that fell upon Atlanta’s Black communities as a result of the 1996 Olympics. It knew that SOME people had made money but also that thousands were brutalized. What did they expect from a Chicago Olympics? Did they really think their fifteen suggestions would be heeded? What if they were ignored? What then?

In 2008 the Chicago Urban League enjoyed revenues of \$4.8 million. And, according to the Chicago Tribune, the CUL received more than \$9.4 million from city contracts, with \$4.5 million received since 2004. ["Olympic pitch to Urban League," Chicago Tribune, February 20, 2009. <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-2009-02-20-0902190528-story.html>]

This, sadly, is the Chicago Way. Do NOT block a terrible public plan pushed by the Mayor that will – for sure – enrich a few – and HOPE to get a few crumbs from the master’s table. The thinking was (and is) – this plan is coming – the Powers

That Be back it so it's a Done Deal, so don't throw yourself (and your organization) under the bus of protest – do NOT make waves. The practice is to issue a report like this one and call it a day. This report, like so many others, is immediately consigned to the dustbin of Chicago civics. Never to be seen again. You can download the document here-> [www.tinyurl.com/CUL-2016-Report](http://www.tinyurl.com/CUL-2016-Report)

**Erma Trantor, President of <https://www.fotp.org/> (FOTP).** FOTP had been completely silent and absent in the fight against the Latin School Lincoln Park Land Grab. Only after a Protect Our Parks (POP) delegation visited their office and made a plea to their board of directors in the spring of 2008 did they respond. FOTP sent POP \$1,000 for our legal expenses, which arrived the week we won the case.

During a phone call Erma said she thought the games were a terrible idea but that the organization could do nothing – that they had been badly burned by suing the city over the illegal re-do of Soldier Field and they spent hundreds of thousands of dollars fighting that bad idea. On WBEZ in mid-March 2009, she was in Washington Park saying the Olympics are what parks are for and that FOTP will fight to restore the historic park after the Games. In March of 2009 we begged a FOTP board member to allow NGC to address them and ask them to join us in opposing the Bid and the destruction of so much public park land. That never happened.

Friends of the Parks should've been THE most vocal and active opponent to the Bid. They published a document of their website in March of 2009, "Friends of the Parks – 2016 Olympics Park Venue Sites" that opened with this statement: "Friends of the Parks supports the concept of hosting the 2016 Olympics in Chicago...Friends of the Parks believes that the 2016 Olympic Games offer a unique opportunity to serve as a catalyst to revitalize the parks in neighborhoods. The Olympics also offer the opportunity to consider undeveloped land that could be used for venue sites and later converted into new parkland at the culmination of the 2016 Games."

Download this document at <http://www.tinyurl.com/FOTP-2016-Rec>.

The document then goes on to list each venue site that was scheduled for a public park and offers suggestions for remediation.

Who were they kidding? There was absolutely NO "opportunity to consider undeveloped land that could be used for venue sites" – the Bid was published and transmitted to the IOC. **The entire rationale behind the Bid was to use public parks in order NOT to spend money on undeveloped land.**

This was a very big let down. Friends of the Parks has been around since 1975 and they were the Number One defender of open space, park lands, and the very concept of "public."

I get that they were bruised and financially challenged by the prolonged legal fight against the re-making of Solider Field – and which they lost. But – that's WHY we have these public-facing defenders like FOTP – to take on the tough fights when they need to be fought – regardless of the odds or consequences. That's why they get their tax-free status. In 2017 they had revenues of \$923,000 and in 2008 their revenues were \$635,000. [Friends of the Parks 990 for 2008. [https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display\\_990/362844241/2010\\_09\\_EO%2F36-2844241\\_990\\_200909](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/362844241/2010_09_EO%2F36-2844241_990_200909)]

So, I was very sad when they did not join the POP fight and very disappointed when they were silent and even complicit in prosecuting the Bid.

**Jim Field, Director of Organizing for the [Chicago Coalition for the Homeless \(CCFTH\)](#).** CCFTH was part of the group trying to negotiate a community benefits agreement. I spoke to Jim on February 27, 2009, and asked with whom is the agreement to be signed? He said, "with the city." I asked if he had any faith that such an agreement would be honored. He said he did. Although the homeless and working poor were aggressively moved out in Atlanta, Beijing and right now in Toronto (as the 2010 Winter Games were being readied), he said his organization had considered the issues and made

their decision. He had no interest in doing an independent study to assess the true impact of the games. He showed no interest or appetite to engage in questioning the Bid, let alone fighting it.

We were stunned. The record is quite clear about the impact of mega events such as the Olympics on rising property values, displacement, and civil rights violations against the unhoused and other folks who are deemed undesirable or questionable – being swept off the streets when the Games come to town. There was a ton of research available in 2008 and early 2009.



Just spend a few minutes exploring the archives at the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions at . See, for example, the June 5, 2007 paper “Mega-Events, Forced Evictions and Displacements.” They said

“Overall, from the first city studied in this publication, Seoul (host of the 1988 Olympics), to Beijing (the upcoming host of the 2008 Olympics twenty years later), we can see patterns of forced evictions preceding the hosting of the Olympic Games. In most Olympic host cities we can also see evidence of escalating housing costs, leading to a reduction in the availability of affordable housing (particularly evident in Barcelona, Atlanta and Sydney) and absolute declines in the level of public housing stock and low cost housing in general (evident in every Olympic Host City studied, from Seoul to London).” [“Mega-Events, Forced Evictions and Displacements,” COHRE Factsheet, June 5, 2007. [https://issuu.com/cohre/docs/cohre\\_megaeventsfactsheet2007](https://issuu.com/cohre/docs/cohre_megaeventsfactsheet2007)]

If we could find this information with no office or staff or budget – certainly the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless could. Their recent 990 return showed revenues of \$4.2 million. In 2008 they enjoyed revenues of \$1.8 million. [Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, 990 Report for 2008.

[https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display\\_990/363292607/2009\\_12\\_EO%2F36-3292607\\_990\\_200906](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/363292607/2009_12_EO%2F36-3292607_990_200906)]

**Amisha Patel, Director of the Grassroots Collaborative (GC)** . The GC is a collaborative of these social justice and community-serving organizations: Action Now, American Friends Service Committee, Brighton Park Neighborhood Council, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, Chicago Teachers Union, Jane Addams Senior Caucus, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, ONE Northside, Service Employees International Union – Healthcare Illinois Indiana, The Jewish Council on Urban Affairs (this is the 2022 membership roster).

Amisha was and is one of the most astute and committed organizers for social justice in Chicago and perhaps the USA. She was a Service Employees International Union (SEIU) organizer for six years and worked with park advisory councils because her local represented the park employees. She was leading a group of neighborhood organizations to try to negotiate a community benefits agreement with the Chicago 2016 organization.

We asked how she could, in good faith, lead a group of neighborhood organizations down this path when there is very little evidence to support the benefits agreement being enforceable - and, more than that, the Games are a financial disaster for the city that would wreck our finances for a generation and far outweigh even modest gifts of a modest number of promised affordable housing units.



The GA saw revenues of \$514,000 in 2017 and had revenues of \$104,000 in 2008. [Grassroots Collaborative 990 Report for 2008. [https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display\\_990/364328006/2010\\_05\\_EO%2F36-4328006\\_990\\_200909](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/364328006/2010_05_EO%2F36-4328006_990_200909)]

Surely SOMEONE had seen the same research we had seen – there is NO WAY a Summer Olympics was going to benefit all the members of the constituent member organizations of the Grassroots Collaborative. But she was firm in holding to following the wishes of "our members" in pursuing the CBA.

**Matthew Brett, Vice Chair for Policy for the Board of Directors for the [Alliance for the Great Lakes \(AFTGL\)](#)** The Alliance had no position on the Games although they have sent a representative to the 2016 Committee Stake Holder committee meeting. "Our staff doesn't have the time to look at this issue. We deal with all the Great Lakes." The only info they had on the Games was from the Bid Book. Again, there was no interest in working with No Games or pushing back on the Bid.

**Steve Perkins, Senior VP for the [Center for Neighborhood Technology \(CNT\)](#).** Steve said that there "are too many unknowns to say" what the impact of the Games will be. He did not know of anyone who was speaking out against the Games. The mission statement of the CNT (from their website in 2022):

"CNT delivers innovative analysis and solutions that support community-based organizations and local governments to create neighborhoods that are equitable, sustainable, and resilient."

Any cursory review of the Olympics up through 2009, including the documented overruns on the London 2012 Games, would tell any social justice practitioner that the Olympics are the antithesis of anything "equitable, sustainable, and resilient." But the Center for Neighborhood Technology – with 2019 revenues of \$2.8 million, and 2008 revenues of \$3.7 million – had nothing to say about the Bid. [Center for Neighborhood Technology, 990 Report for 2008. [https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display\\_990/362967283/2009\\_11\\_EO%2F36-2967283\\_990\\_200812](https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/display_990/362967283/2009_11_EO%2F36-2967283_990_200812)]

**Tom Wolf, President of [Friends of Downtown](#).** Tom introduced Gyata Kimmons from the 2016 Committee as the sole speaker at a public forum at the Cultural Center on August 7, 2008, and enthusiastically embraced the Games for Chicago.

**Todd Dietterle, former Director of Civic Action for the [Community Renewal Society](#); Ralph Martierre, Director of the [Center for Tax and Budget Accountability](#).** The two co-founders of No Games and I gave a long pitch on No Games on February 13, 2009. They agreed that the Games were a scam and very injurious to the city but said that neither was in a position to do anything about it.

**Lisa DiChiera, Advocacy Director of [Landmarks Illinois](#).** She said that they didn't get into these sort of issues. The Games were not on their agenda and she wouldn't pass No Games information on to their members, but she would send an email from us to her staff and board. From their 2022 website: "When a place that is important to people is threatened, Landmarks Illinois is here to help. Through a wide range of programs, we give people the inspiration and the tools they need to save the important places in their lives. We are an on-the-ground advocate, offering technical assistance, practical resources, small grants, education and endless support." Perhaps all the public parks didn't count as "important spaces" that were threatened. Again, there was no interest in taking on the Bid.

**Tom Feltner, Communications Director at the [Woodstock Institute](#).** He said the Olympics were outside their research focus, which is about the impact of federal policies on local finances. Their 2022 website proclaims "At Woodstock Institute, we're working to create an economy where everyone has access to the financial services and resources they need to prosper. We advocate for strong policy initiatives that are backed by research and will close the racial wealth gap in Chicago, in Illinois and nationally." No Games asserted that the 2016 Olympics would have increased the wealth gap in Chicago and would have disproportionately negatively impacted our Black neighborhoods.

**Janet Smith, The [Nathalie P. Voorhees Center for Neighborhood & Community Improvement](#), University of Illinois at Chicago**. Dr. Smith and her deputy, Yittayih Zelalem said they couldn't participate or help. Their 2022 website proclaims "The Voorhees Center is a dynamic resource center that engages residents, leaders, and policymakers seeking effective strategies for advancing community livability and vitality." That sure sounds like they should have jumped at the chance to analyze the impacts of an Olympics on the "livability and vitality" of our neighborhoods. They took a pass.

The above organizations get millions of dollars in grants and contributions annually to protect, improve, advocate for, and expand justice and equity in Chicago. They all were not interested in researching the impacts of hosting the Olympics let alone FIGHTING against it.